

EDUCATION

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE AND STANDARDS

Requirements for Educational Services Certification

Speech-Language Specialist

Proposed Amendment: N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.6

Authorized By: State Board of Education, Lucille Davy, Commissioner,
Department of Education and Secretary, State Board of Education

Authority: N.J.S.A. 18A:6-38

Calendar Reference: See Summary below for explanation of exception to calendar
requirement.

Proposal Number: PRN 2010-021

Submit written comments by March 5, 2010 to:

Dr. Robert Higgins
New Jersey Department of Education
River View Executive Plaza
Building 100, P.O. Box 500
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0500

The agency proposal follows:

Summary

The Department of Education (Department) proposes that the Board amend N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.6(e) to permit a total of six renewals of the emergency Speech Language Specialist certificate compared to the currently authorized four renewals.

N.J.A.C. 6A:9 sets forth the rules governing the preparation, licensure and professional development of those educators required by their positions to be certified. It also contains rules governing the approval of educator preparation programs and the content of such programs. Finally, it contains the rules delineating the organization of, powers of, duties of and proceedings before the State Board of Examiners. The purpose of this chapter is to establish a licensure system based on professional standards for pre-service preparation, certification and professional development that continuously serves to improve the quality of instruction for New Jersey's children so that they are equipped to work and succeed in an ever-changing and increasingly complex global economy. A standards-based, rigorous system of licensure designed to support improved student achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards will serve to improve the quality of the New Jersey educator workforce and to improve student performance.

Subchapter 13. Requirements for Educational Services Certification

N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.6 Speech language specialist

The Department proposes to increase the number of emergency certificate renewals for the Speech Language Specialist (SLS) from four to six. The proposed amendment at

N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.6(e) addresses the critical need to supply SLS staffing, a shortage area, to public schools. The amendment also addresses a critical problem of access for applicants pursuing standard Speech Language Specialist certification who reside in the southern region of the state. Specifically, in contrast to the northern region of the state, which has four Department-approved programs, there are no approved programs in the southern region. The absence of approved programs requires applicants who possess the emergency certificate to travel to programs in Pennsylvania or Delaware or to pursue online studies in order to complete the study required for standard certification. This situation imposes an inequitable burden on those applicants and, for those who travel, also makes unreasonable the current limit of four emergency certificate renewals. In 2006, when the State Board of Education increased the number of SLS emergency certificate renewals from two to four, the Department had sought to promote the development of approved SLS programs in the southern region. However, while Richard Stockton State College has expressed interest in developing the SLS program, this program is not yet established. The Department also believes that increasing the number of emergency certificate renewals from four to six will not adversely impact the quality of SLS services offered to public school students. The issue of quality arises most validly at the beginning of an applicant's emergency status, not at the end of an applicant's program of studies, and the Board has addressed this issue by requiring a bachelor's degree in speech pathology or 12 graduate credits in speech pathology in order to obtain the first emergency certificate.

As the Department has provided a 60-day comment period on this notice of proposal, this notice is excepted from the rulemaking calendar requirements, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 1:30-3.3(a)5.

Social Impact

The proposed amendment will have a positive social impact on the provision of Speech Language Specialist services in New Jersey schools by allowing those holding emergency certificates to complete programs leading to standard certification.

Economic Impact

The Department does not anticipate that the proposed amendment will create additional costs for district boards of education or the general public.

Federal Standards Statement

Federal requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act (PL 107-110, section 1110(a)(2)) requiring that all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified are met through Department policy rather than through rules. However, Speech Language Specialists do not fall under the Federal highly qualified requirements.

Jobs Impact

It is anticipated that the proposed amendments is likely to increase the pool of Speech Language Specialist candidates and will prevent the loss of employment of those candidates who have not been able to complete their program of studies within the current allotment of four emergency certificate renewals.

Agriculture Industry Impact

No impact on the agriculture industry is anticipated as a result of the proposed amendment.

Regulatory Flexibility Statement

The proposed amendment applies to public schools, approved private schools for the disabled, and providers of publicly-funded preschool education. The approved private schools for the disabled and providers of publicly-funded preschool education could be considered small businesses, as that term is defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-16 et seq. There are approximately 164 private schools for the disabled and approximately 500 providers of publicly-funded preschool education. The proposed amendment does not impose any additional reporting, recordkeeping or compliance requirements. The private schools for the disabled and providers of publicly-funded preschool education are currently required to employ appropriately certified teaching staff, and the proposed amendment makes no changes in that requirement. Accordingly,

no professional services should be necessary to comply with the regulatory requirements. There are no capital costs associated with the amendment.

New Jersey institutions of higher education with programs Speech Language Specialists are not small businesses as that term is defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-16 et seq., as they employ 100 or more full-time employees.

Smart Growth Impact

The proposed amendment will not impact the achievement of smart growth or implementation of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

Housing Affordability Impact

The proposed amendment will have no impact on the cost of housing or number of housing units. The proposed amendment concerns professional licensure and standards for teachers.

Smart Growth Development Impact

The proposed amendment will have no impact on the cost of housing, the number of housing units, or new construction within Planning Areas 1 and 2, or designated centers, under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The proposed

amendment concerns professional licensure and standards for teachers.

Full text of the proposal follows (addition indicated in boldface **thus**; deletion indicated in brackets [thus]):

SUBCHAPTER 13. REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CERTIFICATION

6A:9-13.6 Speech-language specialist

(a) – (d) (No change.)

(e) An emergency certificate may be issued to a candidate who either holds a bachelor's degree in speech pathology or is currently enrolled in a master's program in speech pathology in which the candidate has completed a minimum of 12 graduate semester-hours in speech pathology. All study must be completed at a regionally accredited college or university. The emergency certificate may be renewed a total of [four] **six** times.

(f) (No change.)

